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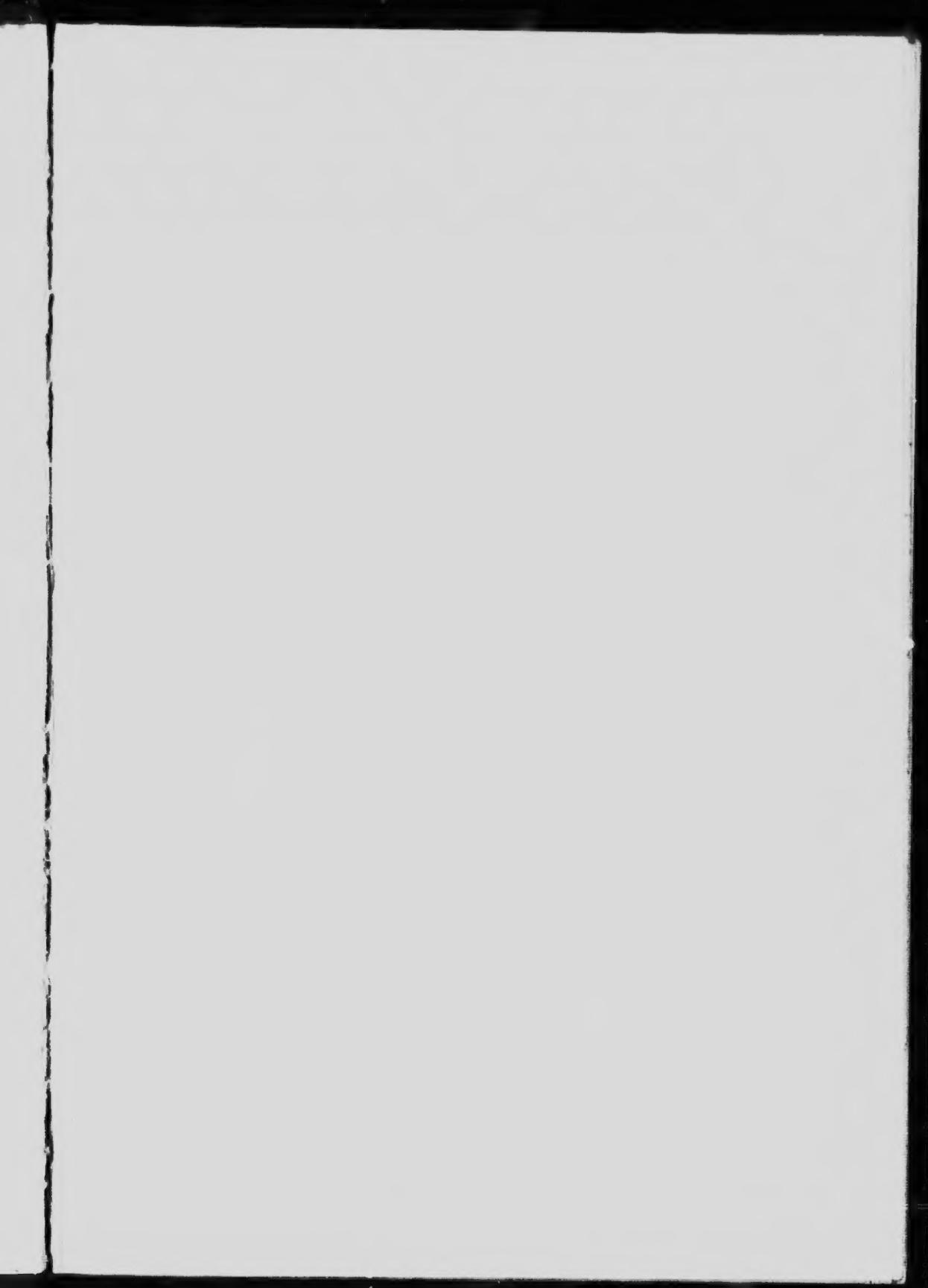


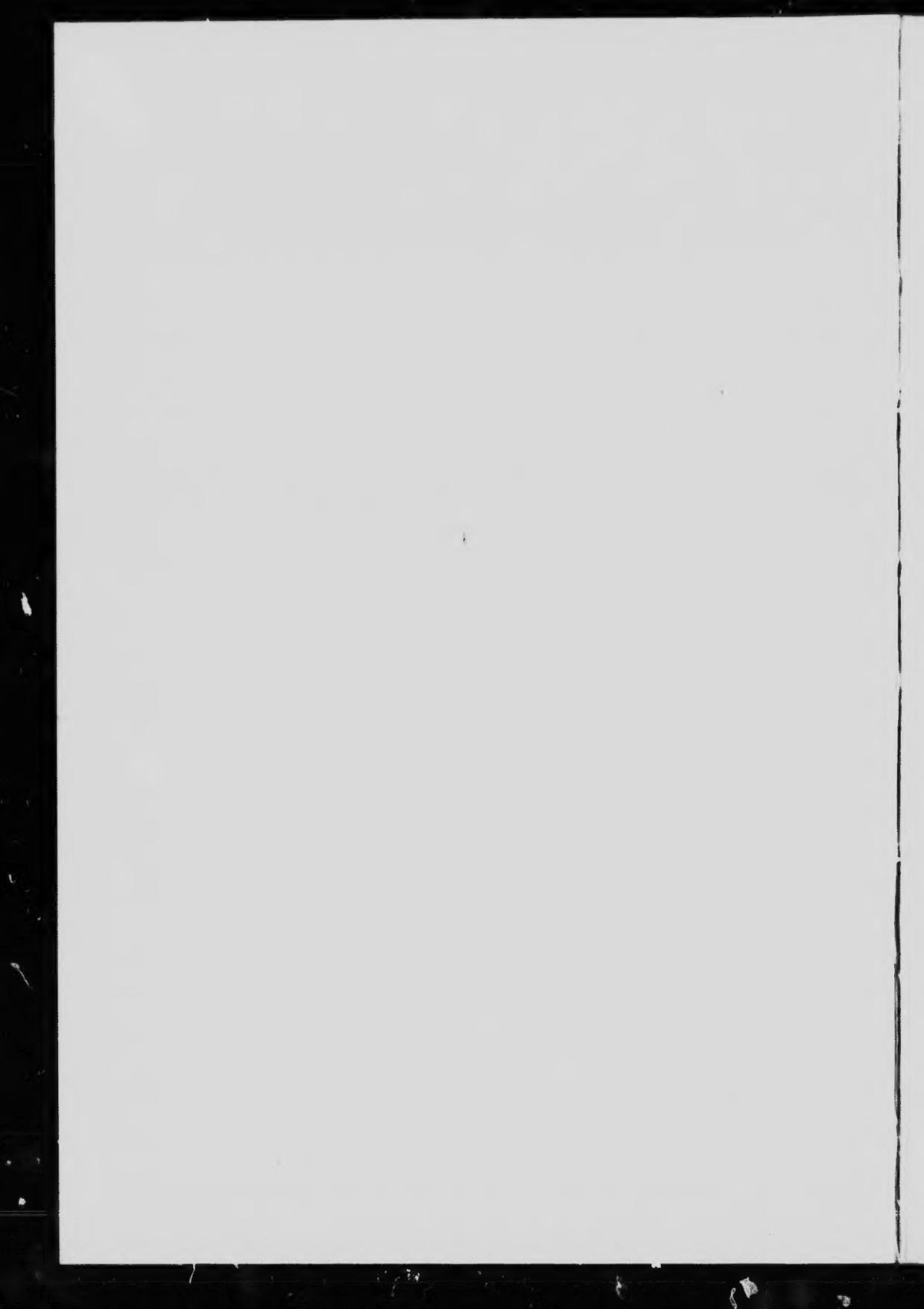
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M. D. HOPKINS

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FRAGMENTS

By M. L. HOPE

Toronto
With ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~days~~ ^{days}

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FE GMENTS



FRAGMENTS

I.

Cheer, oh, my brother, up and be doing,
Leave not a corner untried in the fight;
Hands may be weary, and heart overflowing;
Still ever press onward, doing the right.

See how the morning sun, over the treetops,
Touches the earth with its magical ray,
Bringing fresh hope to the faint and down-hearted,
Tinging with glory the newborn day.

So with fresh courage go forth to thy labors;
Better is toil than an idle day;
Evening will bring thee rest and sweet leisure,
And brighten with gladness thy homeward way.

II.

Over the hills I wandered,
 Away by the summer stream,
And the scent of the clover-clad meadows
 Brought back the glad days that had been.

I sat once again on the cliffside
 As we watched the sun sink in the West;
The sea was a blaze of glory,
 And the sky in rich splendor dressed.

And o'er the still waters the sea-birds
 Were lazily drifting along,
And the whole world seemed to be singing
 Nature's wonderful, mystic song.

And later the moon in her glory
 Cast a pathway over the sea,
And it seemed that the angels were bringing
 The best of life's blessings to me.

But gone are the spring and the summer;
 In the autumn alone I stand,
With only the thoughts of the joyous past—
 Alone in a silent land.

For the birds seem to have ceased their singing,
 The sun, too, no longer shines;
The gladness and joy have departed,
 And only the memories are mine.

III.

Over the hilltops,
Down where the valley drops,
 Drops like an emerald into the sea,
There we went maying,
Blissfully straying,
 All in the springtime,
 Myself and I.

We heard the lambs bleating,
And the rooks call their greeting
 From out of the elm-trees, swaying so free,
And we joined hands together
And raced through the heather,
 All in the glad springtime,
 Myself and I.

IV.

Come, listen to me a moment,
And I will a tale unfold
Of days that are weary and hopeless,
Of nights that are dark and cold.

The sun itself may be shining,
The trees wear their loveliest green,
But the heart that is empty of gladness
Has nothing of sunshine, I ween.

Will it be always winter?
Has summer no sunshine to bring?
Will the days bring no hope of rejoicing—
The days of the glorious spring?

Nay, hope on and lose not thy courage,
Glean out from the grey the gold.
Who knoweth what bountiful treasure
The lap of the future may hold?

v.

Hast thou no thought for me?
Daily I stand, pleading my cause with outstretched
hand.

I know the busy city calls thee away,
Yet hast thou not a moment with me to stay?

If thou but knew it, I before all
Can help thee bear thy grief, answer each call.
Others may stand aloof, deaf to thy cry,
My ear is tuned to even a sigh.

If thou would'st tell me thou need'st my care,
How willingly would I now answer thy prayer.
With ease should'st thou travel, how'er rugged the
way,
Until the perfect close of life's brief day.

VI.

How oft the road seems weary, the pathway long;
And hearts are torn with anguish, and void of song.
They try to bear their burden without a cry,
But, oh, the bitter moments, with no one nigh.

O ye who dwell in sunshine, with love your stay,
Give to the lonely-hearted one passing ray.
You know not how a friendly glance, a little word of
cheer,
Will help them bear their heavy load, will make their
path less drear.

And your sunshine will seem brighter,
Your loved ones dearer still,
When you know you've helped another
A little up life's hill.

VII.

In all the world there is nothing more sweet
Than to hear the patter of baby feet,
Or the little soft coo, as it finds its nest,
And is cuddled into its mother's breast;
To feel a hand on your finger close,
A dear little hand that is like a rose.

To watch, as it wakens all rosy with sleep,
The lovelight into its blue eyes creep,
As it stretches its arms with a winsome grace,
Drawn by the love in its mother's face.
When I clasp you to me, oh, baby mine,
I know that love is a gift divine.

Oh, dear little one with soft, curling hair,
Whom the angels have sent to your mother's care,
Have you just come down from the realms above
To fill my heart with your baby love,
To make me feel that all life is good—
My baby, the crown of womanhood?

VIII.

When you sit in the twilight thinking
Alone in the old armchair,
And the shadows around you deepen
As you whisper for me a prayer,

Do you know that I, too, am thinking
Of you as the shadows fall,
And in fancy I see them darkening
The old familiar wall?

I can see the flickering firelight
Shine on your dear loved face;
And it comforts me often to know that I
Have still in your thoughts a place.

In the days to come when you're no longer there,
When my spirit shall find but your empty chair,
When it wanders forth in its longing quest,
When you shall have entered into your rest,

How empty will seem the silent space
When I can no longer see your face.
But your memory will ever burn bright and clear,
Till I meet you again, O friend, most dear.

IX.

Out to the West, the glorious West,
Where the winds blow fresh and free,
Where Nature is dressed in her bountiful best!
The West is the land for me!

Up and away in the early morn,
To hopefully work together,
Then back at night to your cabin's delight,
Darby and Joan forever.

It may be a rough-hewn, humble shack,
But if you have love and hope at your back,
The future will wear its rosiest hue,
And gild for you both the distant view.

Riches and leisure are dearly bought
If love walks not beside you,
But with love at your side, o'er all troubles you'll ride,
For nothing but death can divide you.

x.

Oh, the glory and joy of living
When life is a summer dream,
When the feet are free to wander
By river and valley and stream;

To roam in the mighty forest,
In the morn of a summer day,
And watch how the golden sunbeams
Through the leaves and branches play;

To be under the wide arch of heaven,
Where the clouds, like angels' wings,
Are drifting across the azure sky,
And the lark in its gladness sings;

To stand on the mountain summit
At the dawning of the day,
And watch the sun in his splendor
Sweep the clouds and the mist away.

To see afar off the distant peaks,
With their everlasting snows,
Break out into radiant beauty
And gleam like the heart of a rose;

And below them the nestling valley
Where the shadows still purple lie;
Oh, there is no glory in all the world
Like the glory of earth and sky.

XI.

O little gold ring that I love so well,
And dear little ring of blue,
I remember the day when I wore you first
And all the world seemed new.

I can still see the sunlit arbor,
All wreathed in trailing vine,
And the look of love in somebody's eyes,
And I knew that that love was all mine.

And the day when the little gold ring I wore
All in the sweet summer weather,
And we left all behind and wandered away,
Just someone and I together.

How quickly those summer days passed away,
As we roamed over mountain and meadow,
Or sailed o'er the bay at the close of the day,
My someone and I together.

Full many a mile we have travelled since then
Through sunny and cloudy weather,
But the clouds have rolled past and the sunshine at last
Find my someone and I still together.

XII.

Turn down that page of the past,
With its sorrows and bitter tears,
And opening a new one clear and fresh,
Take heart for the coming years.

It may be the future seems
As black as the darkest night,
But only look up and you shall see
In the clouds a rift of light.

Think not that I who write
Know nothing of sorrow or pain,
The greatest of life's griefs have I borne
With all their attendant train.

But I still can look up and sing,
And though tremulous be my song
I know that again my soul shall be glad,
And that suffering has made it strong.

XIII.

O the beautiful days of spring
When the maple leaves burst into view,
The exquisite sheen of their verdant green,
With the brown bough showing through.
The blue sky overhead,
And the robins' blithesome song—
All hail to the glorious days of spring
After winter has reigned so long!

Throw open the casement wide,
Let in the balmy air,
Away to the woods and meadows green,
With the odor of spring everywhere;
The rivers have burst into song,
The cascades shower their spray,
For winter has gone with its icy breath,
And summer is on its way.

XIV.

Oh, dear old friend of the long ago,
With the wealth of love in your eyes,
You have a resting-place all your own,
Though the ocean between us lies.

Deep in a niche I have set apart,
Your voice like an echo doth dwell,
And oft when I listen I seem to hear
The tone that I love so well.

The years roll back and I seek you again,
As I did in the days of yore,
And I pray that the time may quickly pass
Until I meet you, my friend, once more.

XV.

The sleigh bells are ringing,
The horses' feet
Fall on my ear with a rhythm sweet.
The sun is shining
On fresh fallen snow,
And the bells jingle merrily
As we go.

The wind blows keenly,
But what do I care?
With the half of a buffalo robe for my share,
And some one beside me with eyes of blue.
In all the world there are only we two.
Like the breath of new life are the frost and snow,
And the jingle of sleigh bells, as we go.

XVI.

Hush, for the angels are bringing
A Christmas message so true.
Not to the wide world only,
But, dear little friend, to you.

A loving message to cheer you
As you travel along life's way,
To tell you that life brims with gladness,
And happiness cometh to stay.

May the year which so soon shall be dawning
Bring you all that your heart can desire,
And hope in your breast spring eternal
As you list to the angel choir.

XVII.

Do you know what it is to bear
The burden of the day,
And yet when the night hath fallen
To have no heart to pray?

To stretch forth your hands imploring
For help to bear your cross,
And still have to go on your way alone,
With none to heed your loss?

Ah, then if you do, you will understand
Your brother's despairing cry,
And in helping to comfort his aching heart
Your own will be healed thereby.

For there's never a sorrow in all the world
That another hath not borne;
So bravely bury it out of sight,
And greet with a smile the morn.

XVIII.

Only a pair of little shoes,
With their dainty ribbon ties,
But they wring a sob from my aching heart,
Tears from my longing eyes.

Only a battered hobby-horse,
Alone on the nursery floor,
But the little hands that clutched its mane
Will play with their steed no more.

A little cot so close to mine,
How oft in the silent night
Have I hushed to sleep the restless form,
Or drawn the coverlet tight.

It still stands there, but empty now;
No head doth the pillow press.
No little hands outstretch to mine,
In answer to my caress.

No baby arms around my neck,
Or soft cheek pressed to mine,
Or little curls, where the sunshine hid,
To round my fingers twine.

An angel child I know is mine,
And precious indeed is the thought.
But you who miss your on'y one
Know the price with which it was bought.

XIX.

Autumn has cast her brilliant hues
O'er all the waiting land.
I gaze through a sea of shimmering gold,
When in the forest depths I stand.
Beneath my feet a carpet of brown
Is spread o'er the dew-laden grass.
A chipmunk hears the rustle of leaves,
And hides till my footsteps pass.

A shower of gold comes raining down,
And, looking up, I see
The whisk of a tail, and a pair of bright eyes
Looking out from the boughs at me.
And through the forest's crimsoned glade
Clear waters I espied,
Where the wild ducks gather to say farewell,
Ere they spread their wings and fly.

And over all the bright blue sky,
With a white cloud here and there;
The bluejay calls from the topmost bough
Of a giant maple near.
The wind is blowing fresh and keen,
With a tang of the northern sea,
Bringing the winter with ice and snow
To fetter the waters free.

xx.

Oh, Lord, when shadows deepen,
And darkness falls,
When through the gathering mists
I hear Thee call,
Then let Thy loving presence
My fears allay,
And fill with holy gladness
Life's closing day.

Dear Lord, this crowning blessing
I dare not claim.
But in the wondrous power
Of Thy dear name.
Oh, now while still I'm walking
Life's golden way,
I pray Thee to remember me
When comes that day.

It may be that the summons falls
When least I fear.
Then let me feel Thy presence,
Dear Saviour, near.
And feeling, calmly follow,
With love's abounding trust.
For where love leads, as well we know,
We ever follow must.

XXI.

Oh, dear little toddling baby,
With your innocent, wondering eyes,
Your hands outstretched to my waiting arms,
Where you know that safety lies,—

When I watch your uncertain footsteps,
Then clasp you to my breast,
It seems that all the longing of years
In motherhood hath rest.

When I bury my face in your dimpled neck,
And hear your soft coo of delight,
Then kiss those dear little rosy toes
Ere I tuck them away for the night,

I bless the gracious giver
Who hath sent you, my baby, to me,
And pray that the years may ever bring
The best of life's blessings to thee.

XXII.

I awoke in the dark of a winter's morn ;
The wind blew loud and shrill,
As though the spirits of all the lost
Were working their tragic will.

The giant trees bowed their naked heads,
With a moan of utter despair,
As the boughs were torn from their aching sides
And hurled through the wintry air.

A wayfarer passing on his way
Bowed his head to the bitter blast.
A dog sat cowering from the storm
In the shelter a doorway cast.

But the wind died down, and a mighty peace
Hushed the storm-tossed trees to rest.
They stilled as a child will when it is soothed
To sleep on its mother's breast.

And gently there fell a mantle of snow,
As soft as an angel's wing.
It covered the wounds the storm had made,
And its coming gave promise of spring.

For I knew that where the scars now were
Fresh leaves and buds would burst,
And birds sing again on leafy boughs,
Which now by the snow were nursed.

XXIII.

Oh, the wonderful joy and blessing,
Which filleth my hungry soul,
When I touch but the hem of His garment,
And feel my spirit made whole.

I go on my way rejoicing,
All hopelessness passed away.
For He who is of all light the source
Hath turned the dark night into day.

And should I grow tired or weary,
As travellers ever may do,
I know I have only to look to Him,
And He will my strength renew.

I also was only one of the crowd,
But fain would nearer be,
So I touched the hem of His sacred robe,
And the touch brought healing to me.

xxiv.

Why are you downcast, friend of mine?
Lift up your drooping head.
Never lose heart while you have life,
Or think that hope is dead.

You have only to lift those downcast eyes
To the starry skies above,
To know that one reigns over all,
Whose glory and joy is love.

I know that oft when the morning brea'ks,
And you take up your daily task,
To give up and not renew the fight
Is all that your soul would ask.

But ever take courage, oh, my friend,
Fight the malignant foe.
And oft you will find that your greatest trial
Is naught but a fancied woe.

XXV.

Slumber the gods at the foot of thy mountains,
O Rockies, mighty and grand!
Deep in thy canons dreameth the ice king
Asleep at the west wind's command.
Awake are thy rivers and deep pools,
The torrents fling far o'er the mountain their spray.
Down in the glens where the wild flowers are blooming
The dryads and mountain nymphs stray.

Hark how the breezes sing through the pine trees,
A song the initiate know;
Whispering the secrets of time since creation
Raised thy mighty peaks mantled with snow.
Tempests and storms have raged o'er and around thee,
But still in the summer sun's glow
The tints of the opal gleam on thy summits,
The streams murmur soft as they flow.

Down in thy gorges flows the swift river,
Over huge boulders the fierce rapids leap.
Shineth the moon serene in her splendour,
And deep in thy caverns the grizzly doth sleep.
Restless he stirs as the foot of the hunter,
Breaking the silence, falls on his ear.
Then reassured sinks back to his slumber,
While now in its radiance the sun riseth clear.

Great are thy glories, O world-famed Rockies,
Thy canons rich painted by Nature's free hand.
Thy peaks like turrets, in some old world ruin,
Rise tier above tier in their majesty grand.
May the land over which thou standest
Proud sentinel, ever its record of liberty keep,
And the lives of thy great men ever add to thy glory,
O land of vast mountains and waters deep.

XXVI.

Now where are my rose-coloured glasses?
I've searched every place I know.
Have even turned up all the cushions,
But I can't find them high or low.

The blue ones, I know just where they are,
And even the grey ones I see.
It is only my dear little rose ones
That seem bent on evading me.

But I won't give up till I find them,
Because, as I'm sure you all know,
There's nothing like rose-hued glasses
For brightening the days as they go.

The outlook may often seem gloomy,
And you may feel inclined to lose heart,
But just put on those bright coloured glasses,
And you will find you can make a fresh start.

XXVII.

Sunshine and laughter, gladness and song,
How they brighten the days as we travel along.
Should we chance to look back through the swift passing
years,
We shall wonder why many were clouded with fears.

Dear sunshine and laughter, thy praise will I sing,
Gladness and song to thee ever cling.
For there's nothing can cheer a sad heart on its way
Like the lilt of a song on a sweet summer's day.

